Mobile hospitals for disaster management

3978. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have started mobile hospital plan to cope with natural calamities in the country;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that these do not seem to be able to fulfil its aim especially after Tsunami calamity; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Following Tsunami disaster Government of India along with the States/UTs have mounted massive relief and rescue operations. Hon'ble Minister for Health & F.W. spearheaded the medical relief activities. More than 290 doctors including public health and mental health experts and 99 paramedics drawn from Central Government Institutions were deputed to the affected areas for medical relief activities. Adequate quantity of drugs, disinfectants and insecticides were provided to the affected States/UTs.

Public health measures included diseases surveillance, ensuring safe drinking water supply, vector control measures, immunization against measles, vitamin A supplementation and health education. Except for sporadic cases of diarrhoea, respiratory tract infection etc. there had been no outbreak of diseases. Mental health professional provided community based psychosocial support including training of volunteers to continue the activities.

To augment the quick response for drastic management, Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is procuring a self-contained, container based mobile hospital. International Competitive Bids have been invited and commissioning is likely to be completed by the end of 2005.

Iodine Deficient Disorders

3979. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that deficiency in the intake of iodine causes goitre and other Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of persons at present suffering in India from IDD; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to ensure adequate intake of iodised salt by persons to get rid of IDD?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Besides goitre, the other Iodine Deficiency Disorders are physical and mental retardation, squint, cretinism, deaf-mutism, still birth, abortion, neuromotor defects etc. Iodine Deficiency Disorders surveys conducted by Directorate General of Health Services, Indian Council of Medical Research and the State Health Directorates have revealed that out of 321 districts surveyed covering 35 States/UTs 260 districts are endemic to IDD i.e. where the prevalence rate of IDD is more that 10%. It is estimated that the number of people presently suffering from Iodine Deficiency Disorders is about 70 million.

(d) In order to prevent and control the problem of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDDs), the Government is implementing National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme in the country. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is providing financial assistance for establishment of IDD Control Cell and IDD Monitoring Laboratory to the States/UTs for effective implementation of National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme. Office of the Salt Commissioner, functioning under the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion in the Government of India, is engaged in the planning of production and distribution of iodised salt to meet the required demand in the country.

In order to increase the consumption of iodised salt, the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities have been intensified in all the States/UTs through Prasar Bharati, All India Radio, Song & Drama Division, Directorate of Field Publicity and Directorate of Advertisement and Visual Publicity (DAVP) besides allocation of fund to the State Governments for health education at the State level.

Heart Disease in Delhi

3980. SHRI V. NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Delhities are suffering from heart ailment; and